

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. In a computer network having two or more computing devices in communication, a method for managing data available for access on the network, the method comprising:

obtaining, at a host computing device included as part of the computer network and associated with a user, a request to identify data corresponding to a set of criteria;

obtaining an identification of data stored on the host computing device associated with the user request and matching the set of criteria;

automatically obtaining an identification of data stored on at least one computing device included in the computer network and matching the set of criteria;

merging the identification of data stored on the host computing device associated with the user request and the identification of data stored on at least one computing device included in the computer network; and

generating a result of the merging the identification of data stored on the host computing device associated with the user request and the identification of data stored on at least one computing device included in the computer network.

2. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the request to identify data corresponding to the set of criteria corresponds to a request to view data associated with a unique identifier corresponding to the user.

3. The method as recited in Claim 2, wherein the request to identify data corresponding to the set of criteria corresponds to data in which the user is determined to be an owner of the data.

4. The method as recited in Claim 2, wherein the request to identify data corresponding to the set of criteria corresponds to data in which the user is determined to have permission to view the data.

5. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein obtaining an identification of data stored on at least one computing device included in the computer network and matching the set of criteria includes generating a database query corresponding to a request to identify data corresponding to the set of criteria.

6. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein obtaining an identification of data stored on at least one computing device included in the computer network and matching the set of criteria includes transmitting a security identifier corresponding to the user.

7. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the computer network includes three or more networked computers and wherein obtaining an identification of data stored on at least one computing device included in the computer network and matching the set of criteria includes obtaining an identification of data stored on each computer included in the computer network and matching the set of criteria.

8. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein generating a result includes displaying the identification of the data without identifying the location of the data.

9. The method as recited in Claim 1 further comprising:  
obtaining on the host computing device an indication to manipulate data corresponding to the result of the merging the identified data, wherein the data selected to be manipulated is remote from the host computing device;  
transmitting a security identifier corresponding to the user;  
obtaining permission to manipulate the selected data; and  
manipulating the data selected to be manipulated.

10. The method as recited in Claim 1 further comprising maintaining a record of the result of the merging the identification of data stored on the host computing device associated with the user request and the identification of data stored on at least one computing device included in the computer network.

11. The method as recited in Claim 10 further comprising:

obtaining, at a host computing device, a second request to identify data corresponding to a set of criteria;

obtaining an identification of content stored on the host computing device associated with the user request and matching the set of criteria;

determining that the at least one computing device is not available to receive a content query;

recalling the record of the result of the merging the identification of data stored on the host computing device associated with the user request and the identification of data stored on at least one computing device included in the computer network;

merging the identification of data stored on the host computing device associated with the user request and the record of the result of the merging the identification of data stored on the host computing device associated with the user request and the identification of data stored on at least one computing device included in the computer network; and

generating a result of the merging the identification of data stored on the host computing device associated with the user request and the record of the result of the merging the identification of data stored on the host computing device associated with the user request and the identification of data stored on at least one computing device included in the computer network.

12. The method as recited in Claim 11, wherein generating a result of the merging the identification of data stored on the host computing device associated with the user request and the record of the result of the merging the identification of data stored on the host computing device associated with the user request and the identification of data stored on at least one computing device included in the computer network includes generating visual cues corresponding to the data not currently available to the user.

13. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method recited in Claim 1.

14. A computer system having a processor, a memory and an operating system, the computer system operable to perform the method recited in Claim 1.

15. In a computer network having two or more computing devices in communication, a method for managing data available for access on the network, the method comprising:

obtaining a user request to identify content stored on the two or more computing devices;

automatically querying the two or more computing devices within the computer network to identify the contents of local computing device storage locations associated with a unique user identifier;

merging the results of the queries; and

displaying the results of the merge query results.

16. The method as recited in Claim 15, wherein the request to identify content corresponding to the unique user identifier corresponds to content in which the user is determined to be an owner of the content .

17. The method as recited in Claim 15, wherein the request to identify content corresponding to the unique user identifier corresponds to content in which the user is determined to have permission to view the content.

18. The method as recited in Claim 15, wherein automatically querying the two or more computing devices within the computer network to identify the contents of local computing device storage locations corresponding to the unique user identifier includes generating a database query corresponding to a request to identify content corresponding to the unique user identifier.

19. The method as recited in Claim 15, wherein automatically querying the two or more computing devices within the computer network to identify the contents of local computing device storage locations corresponding to the unique user identifier includes processing a security identifier associated with the unique user identifier.

20. The method as recited in Claim 15, wherein the computer network includes three or more networked computers and wherein automatically querying the two or more

computing devices within the computer network to identify the contents of local computing device storage locations corresponding to the unique user identifier includes querying each computer included in the computer network to identify the contents of local computing device storage locations corresponding to the unique user identifier.

21. The method as recited in Claim 15 further comprising:

- obtaining a request to manipulate one or more pieces of content included in the merged results, wherein the content selected to be manipulated is remote from a computing obtaining the request;

- transmitting a security identifier corresponding to the unique user identifier;

- obtaining permission to manipulate the selected content; and

- manipulating the content selected to be manipulated.

22. The method as recited in Claim 15 further comprising maintaining a record of the result of the merging the results of the queries.

23. The method as recited in Claim 22 further comprising:

- obtaining a second user request to identify content stored on the two or more computing devices;

- obtaining an identification of content stored on a computing device associated with the unique user identifier and matching the unique user identifier;

- determining that the at least one computing device is not available to receive a content query;

- recalling the record of the result of the merging of the results of the queries;

- merging the identification of data stored on the computing device associated with the unique user identifier and the record of the result of the merging of the results of the queries; and

- generating a result of the merging the identification of data stored on the computing device associated with the unique user identifier and the record of the result of the merging of the results of the queries.

24. The method as recited in Claim 23, wherein displaying the results of the merge query results includes generating visual cues corresponding to the data not currently available to the user.

25. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method recited in Claim 15.

26. A computer system having a processor, a memory and an operating system, the computer system operable to perform the method recited in Claim 15.

27. In a computer network having a computing device directly associated with a user and at least one remote computing device in communication, a method for managing data available for access on the network, the method comprising:

- obtaining, by the computing device directly associated with a user, a request to identify data corresponding to a set of criteria;

- obtaining, by the computing device directly associated with a user, an identification of locally stored content matching the set of criteria;

- transmitting, by the computing device directly associated with a user, a request to the remote computing device for an identification of content matching the set of criteria;

- obtaining, by the remote computing device, an identification of locally stored content matching the set of criteria;

- transmitting, by the remote computing device, the identification of locally stored content matching the set of criteria

- merging, by the computing device directly associated with the user, content matching the set of criteria; and

- generating, by the computing device directly associated with the user, a result of the merged content matching the set of criteria.

28. The method as recited in Claim 27, wherein the request to identify data corresponding to the set of criteria corresponds to a request to view data associated with a unique identifier correspond to the user.

29. The method as recited in Claim 28, wherein the request to identify data corresponding to the set of criteria corresponds to data in which the user is determined to be an owner of the data.

30. The method as recited in Claim 28, wherein the request to identify data corresponding to the set of criteria corresponds to data in which the user is determined to have permission to view the data.

31. The method as recited in Claim 27 further comprising transmitting, by the computing device directly associated with the user, a security identifier corresponding to the user.

32. The method as recited in Claim 27, wherein the computer network includes a second networked computer remote from the user, the method further comprising:

transmitting, by the computing device directly associated with a user, a request to the second remote computing device for an identification of content matching the set of criteria;

obtaining, by the second remote computing device, an identification of locally stored content matching the set of criteria;

transmitting, by the second remote computing device, the identification of locally stored content matching the set of criteria; and

merging, by the computing device directly associated with the user, content matching the set of criteria.

33. The method as recited in Claim 27, wherein generating the merged content matching the set of criteria includes displaying the identification of the content without identifying the location of the content.

34. The method as recited in Claim 27 further comprising:

obtaining, by the computing device directly associated with the user, an indication to manipulate data corresponding to the result of the merged content, wherein the data selected to be manipulated is stored on the remote computing device;

transmitting, by the computing device directly associated with the user, the request to manipulate the selected data and a security identifier to the remote computing device;

obtaining, by the remote computing device, the request to manipulate the selected data and the security identifier corresponding to the user;

processing, by the remote computing device, the request to manipulate the selected data and the security identifier to determine whether the user is authorized to manipulate the selected data;

transmitting, by the remote computing device, permission to manipulate the selected data ;

obtaining, by the computing device directly associated with the user, the permission;  
and

manipulating, by the computing device directly associated with the user, the selected data.

35. The method as recited in Claim 27 further comprising maintaining a record of the result of the merging of content matching the set of criteria.

36. The method as recited in Claim 35 further comprising:

obtaining, by the computing device directly associated with the user, a second request to identify data corresponding to a set of criteria;

obtaining, by the computing device directly associated with the user, an identification of locally stored content matching the set of criteria;

determining, by the computing device directly associated with the user, that the remote computing device is not available to receive a content query;

recalling, by the computing device directly associated with the user, the record of the result of the merging of content matching the set of criteria;

merging, by the computing device directly associated with the user, the identification of locally stored content matching the set of criteria and the record of the result of the merging of content matching the set of criteria; and



generating a result of the merging of the identification of locally stored content matching the set of criteria and the record of the result of the merging of content matching the set of criteria.

37. The method as recited in Claim 36, wherein generating a result of the merging of the identification of locally stored content matching the set of criteria and the record of the result of the merging of content matching the set of criteria includes generating visual cues corresponding to the data not currently available to the user.

38. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method recited in Claim 27.

39. A computer system having a processor, a memory and an operating system, the computer system operable to perform the method recited in Claim 27.